1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

goods from the trans-'Iraq route to Muḥammara and the new Persian port of Bandar Shahpur all contributed to lessen the long-profitable transit trade, whose sentence of extinction could not, it seemed, be long delayed unless the Mediterranean route across Syria could be developed; and of this there were hopeful signs.

Banking continued in the hands of local *ṣarrafs* and the three British Banks: the Ottoman, Eastern, and Imperial Bank of Persia. The adoption of the decimal system was officially proclaimed in 1931, though twenty years later the *ḥugga*, the *taghar*, the *mann*, and the *dhira'* were still widely in use. Wholesale and retail trade followed familiar channels, with British firms predominating in the foreign element; 30 per cent. of the country's imports were of United Kingdom origin, though neither in this nor in any commercial operation did the Mandatary claim advantage over competitors. Imported goods found favour less by quality than by cheapness; this allowed Japanese competition for the first time to intrude, especially in cheap silk and cotton textiles. Woollen goods and steel came from Belgium, sugar from Holland, vehicles from America, wood from Scandinavia and Rumania, rice and tea from India, and most of the rest, notably cotton textiles, pumps and machinery, from Great Britain. The exports, as ever, were of dates, grain, hides and skins, wool, intestines, liquorice, and live animals. These at lowered prices held their own satisfactorily during the period of depression. Monetary conditions in Europe led, after 1930, to export of gold from 'Iraq, giving a temporary stimulus to its economy.

Until the hard times of 1929 to 1932, which they survived creditably, municipal development and the public services were expanding. A Municipal Law of 1929 superseded the Turkish regulations, municipal revenues were overhauled, and the hundred townships of every size and degree pursued their work of street improvement, bridge building, and provision of gardens, electric power plants, and sometimes officials' houses. In the major towns a period of rapid suburban development began, absorbing capital used hitherto in the transit trade. A 'New Baghdad' was planned on the right bank of the Tigris. The concession given in 1912 for electric power was amended and confirmed, after years of negotiation, in favour of the Baghdad Power and Light Company, and a new power-house came into operation; the tramway project was abandoned. Tolerable hotels appeared in the three cities and in Kirkuk, supplemented by Railway rest-houses at smaller towns. The technique of brick-making, the methods in the building industry, the types of modern dwelling-house, domestic equipment, the scale and resources of the shops: all these advanced incomparably beyond Ottoman standards. European dress was

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

old, mere trouble and recalcitrance, but a contribution both economically and politically valuable to a modern State.

In the towns, an observer of conditions in 1950 was faced with the same dilemma as in the tribes: how extensive was the change, if any, which fifty years had brought about? Outwardly at least, it was considerable. If some parts of the towns were as narrow, airless, and planless as of old—if the same donkeys carried the same goods for sale amid the flies and jostling of the same bazaars—yet in the main traffic streets and the new quarters all was changed and unrecognizable; and modernized surroundings, with the public State services now maintained, could not but contribute to the sum of urban well-being. All the larger towns had improved approaches, modern suburbs ranging from a few villas to whole areas of planned streets, planted boulevards, public gardens, and modern public buildings[1] immensely superior to those of Ottoman Turkey, few and cheaply constructed as these buildings had been forced to be.[2] Street-cleaning services were—save perhaps in the labyrinth of an 'old quarter'—not inadequate; streets were well maintained, increasingly paved, and widened where possible. Town planning schemes were under execution with the inclusion, or the hope, of house-building developments for the working poor and for Government officials; and private enterprise in building was encouraged by the improved security, the well-kept title-registers, the development of town amenities, and the need for outlets for safe investment. In the capital a modern omnibus service—the autonomous Baghdad Passenger Transport Board—supplied all needs and would naturally be, as in Baṣra it had been, imitated in the provincial towns. Taxicabs were everywhere abundant and in Baghdad had nearly, but not quite, driven the ancient *'arabana* from the streets. Traffic control was excellent. Steel or masonry bridges had in many places besides Baghdad and Mosul replaced the primitive pontoon river crossings. Modern shops had come year by year into existence, and could provide buyers of all classes with all but exceptional needs. Hotels offered a near approach to normal European service. The cinema was well established; American, European, and Egyptian films were shown in some sixty picture-theatres throughout 'Iraq. Efficient fire services existed in the principal towns, and had well justified themselves. Systems of piped water and electrical installations for power and lighting had been constructed in all larger towns; the

[1] The mausoleum of King Faysal I, built in 1934–6, is usually accounted the finest modern building in 'Iraq.

[2] Large sums were however allotted by the Development Board to building projects for the period 1951–6: for hospitals and health institutions, ID 5,400,000: for schools, 5,400,000: for other public buildings, 5,250,000: and for housing (officials and the poor), 1,650,000.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

power station at Baghdad was the property of a British company, that of Basra belonged to the Port, while Kirkuk was supplied with current by its all-providing oil company.

The revised labour legislation of 1942, the activity of the Ministry of Social Affairs, interest in International Labour Office literature and standards, and the employment since 1949 of a British expert on labour questions were guarantees that, though part of the Code was not applied, progress was real towards an effective interest in urban labour conditions and safeguards; it extended to trade union organization, the establishment of Labour Exchanges, housing schemes and welfare, and plans for social security whose realization was delayed only by their high cost. Meanwhile limited welfare facilities—dispensaries, canteens, clubs, sports grounds—were offered voluntarily by a few employers such as the Port, the Railways, and the more considerable industrial companies. They were provided on a much larger scale, and as part of a comprehensive organization, by the oil companies.

In domestic living standards, if it was true that the modernization and Westernization of the urban middle and lower-middle classes still left 'the poor' little better provided in their own homes than fifty years earlier, yet the proportion of households able to rise above their old deficiencies had much increased, and the private life of the middle as of the upper classes showed that in their domestic equipment and housing, hygiene, clothes, and range of interests great changes had been somehow effected in the last two generations. In men's and women's clothing, in the appearance and conduct of households, the serving of meals, and more generally in family and social life, Western ways had gained much ground. Resistance to the emancipation of women was now narrowing; the Muslim veil was frequently discarded; women learned and taught, entered the professions of medicine and law, followed politics (including Communism), took part in social work, and through their Women's Society were heard to demand the franchise. Circles, however, where women were strictly secluded were still considerable, and included the households of many leading notables and the royal family itself.

Social life was diversified by increased visiting between families, by the cinematograph, by cabarets of both Oriental and Western type, by casinos and modernized cafés. The traditional coffee shop kept its place for the male members of all classes and, within the social grade for which each catered, was still the club and business centre of thousands. Club life had developed to include the exclusive social clubs of the rich, the middle-class professional clubs of the lawyers, Army officers, and officials of various branches of Government, and a dozen sporting clubs; but the

3: Clark 5-5 (1950) 1951 MH1 Iraq MH1

872 645 embody previous legislation and regulations into the General Education Law of 1940. Under this law it was directed that 'The Ministry of Education shall undertake to create a nation sound in body and mind and character'. So far as primary education was concerned it was provided that it should be free, that the age of admission to the primary school should not be less than six and that the period should be six years. It was also decreed that 'Primary education shall be obligatory and shall be carried out in the districts assigned by the Ministry of Education when [681] necessary facilities are available. Pupils' guardians infringing this Article shall be liable to a fine not exceeding three dinars'.

871 645 By this time the administration of education had been highly systematized and it remains so in the hands of the Ministry of Education centred in Baghdad. A feature of this administration is its very high degree of centralization, with the Ministry of Education controlling and supervising the most minute details both of curricula and expenditure. The Minister of Education himself appears to exercise a greater control of detail than in other countries. Under the Minister primary education is directed by a Director-General of Primary Education. In each of the fourteen provinces of Iraq there is a Provincial Director of Education who is, in reality, the agent of the Ministry of Education, and is in no sense a local official responsible to a local authority.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

872 658 Although legal provision for compulsory primary education was made in the General Education Law of 1940, as a reality it does not exist in any part of Iraq. Over the whole of the country out of an estimated total of 750,000 children of primary school age, not more than 175,000 attend primary schools.

Shortly after the passing of the General Education Law of 1940 an attempt was made to apply its compulsory primary education provisions in two of the provinces. Apparently, however, the declaration of compulsory education in these two provinces failed in its object. The main reasons for this failure were the poverty [464] of the majority of the parents who were unable to dispense with the labour of their children on the land, the mobility of part of the population which was still in a semi-nomadic state, and the [362] inability to persuade teachers to live in remote villages where housing facilities and other amenities are most inadequate. It is also stated that, these economic and social reasons apart, other [696] factors such as the unwillingness of the local courts to inflict the legal penalties for non-attendance and the active opposition of

3: Clark S-5 (1950) 1951 MH1 Iraq MH1

will be necessary to consider improved arrangements for the housing of teachers, especially in the rural areas. Because of the limited housing facilities in many of the villages, the majority of the teachers in the rural areas live under most unsatisfactory domestic conditions. Some live in the staff-rooms or school store. Others dwell in improvized buildings which are inadequate both for their personal needs and the status they should occupy in local society. It is because of circumstances of this kind that some of the teachers who work in the villages feel that they are undertaking penance, from which they will only escape when they can secure transfer to a town.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLING

The Corporate Life of the Primary School. Apart from some of the more established town schools where staffs have served in the same school for a number of years, many of the schools seem to lack that corporate life which is essential to the success of any school community. This is partly due to the fact that, because of unsatisfactory living conditions outside the larger centres of population, many teachers stay in the rural schools for only very short periods. They hardly get to know their pupils as individuals and do not stay long enough to assimilate the life of the surrounding community or to influence it. These conditions, when remedied by the provision of teachers' houses, possibly accompanied by 'rural teachers' allowances', will do much to improve the quality of the school as a community.

Greater Freedom for Teachers. As the teaching profession becomes better trained and housed, it is to be expected that they will be allowed greater freedom in the preparation of their own programmes of study and activity. Complaints are frequently made that, because the existing programmes of study are centrally prepared and prescribed, they restrict the freedom of the teachers. This is only partly true because, although the primary school programme is overloaded and does not provide for sufficient differentiation either as between urban and rural schools or as between the sexes, it is not perhaps so illiberal in conception as some of those who interpret it.

Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that the time will come when, with a better qualified primary school teaching cadre, it will be possible for the Ministry of Education to abandon centrally prescribed syllabuses in favour of something in the way of 'A Programme of Suggestions for Teachers'. If such a programme

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that he can devote his full time to public health work. It will also be important to provide both the provincial and district medical officers with sufficient transportation to enable them to discharge their duties.

VI. Community Planning and Facilities

In the past, communities have unavoidably grown up rather haphazardly. The older parts of the cities are characterized by great congestion, narrow and winding streets, open drains and generally unsanitary living conditions. Livestock are frequently kept in buildings and backyards of major cities. Overcrowding has been greatly aggravated by the influx of people from the land seeking to escape the hard conditions of life in the rural areas and to find opportunities for employment in the cities. Many of these have simply squatted on vacant lots and on the outskirts of cities; they live in primitive, poorly constructed mud and mat huts under conditions of great squalor and without sanitary facilities. Baghdad has about 60,000 of these so-called *sarifa* dwellers and Basra probably no less than 20,000. In each case most of them have immigrated from the province of Amara where problems of land tenure and the silting and salting of land have made conditions of life unusually difficult. Sewage systems are lacking in all of the cities.

Villages are generally clusters of mud houses where, in many cases, men and livestock are not segregated. They have usually grown up around wells or along streams and irrigation canals under conditions where water pollution becomes inevitable. For the most part, safe water supplies are not available. The current flight from the land cannot be arrested as long as the ordinary village lacks the most elementary facilities of sanitation, medical aid, clean drinking water, and schooling, and generally offers little attraction to the person who wants to improve his lot and enjoy a reasonably comfortable life.

Dwellings of mud and mats are not of themselves undesirable. They have the advantage of cheapness and, when properly constructed, are well adapted to climatic conditions in Iraq. Often,

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362 however, they are poorly built and too small; and they are crowded
342 together on sites and under conditions which breed disease.

Need for Community Planning

361 In recent decades there has been a growing awareness of the need for community planning, better housing and community facilities. With respect to villages, little has as yet been done except for the planned development of the Dujaila project. Here some effort was made to have houses erected according to standard specifications and to depart from the village-type of settlement by requiring that houses be erected in groups of four on the adjoining corners of four land allotments. As an aid to town and city planning there has been created within the Department of Municipalities of the Ministry of Interior a small planning section to provide "technical advice as regards municipal schemes for the organization and planning of cities and towns in accordance with modern principles". The municipalities themselves have been charged with "the division of the town into areas having regard to its development capacity and the specifications of plans to be followed for the improvement of streets, public places and buildings in such areas". The final responsibility for planning has, however, remained unclear. The surveys, plans and partial plans have generally been hastily drawn and with little regard for the actual conditions prevailing in the community. In any event, municipalities have for the most part continued to develop without reference to any plans. In many towns new streets have been arbitrarily cut through residential and commercial districts with little concern for real needs or for the people affected. The various ministries concerned with the erection of schools, hospitals, public buildings and bridges generally locate their projects without reference to an overall plan and without consultation with each other.

361 There is today a real need for integrated community planning.
647 The Mission believes that it would be desirable to work towards the establishment of a genuine Community Planning Office in the Ministry of Interior. Such an office should ultimately be staffed with an adequate number of experts versed in architecture, engineering and other aspects of town planning. The first step might be to strengthen the existing planning section in the Department of

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Municipalities by appointing a capable, experienced town planner as director and giving him authority to build up a trained staff gradually. It could serve both the Development Board and local authorities in coordinating development projects on the community level and in ascertaining whether the projects for schools, hospitals, and similar facilities in any given community are properly related to the needs and facilties of neighboring communities.

Housing Developments

Public and quasi-public housing has received increased attention in recent years. The Ministry of Social Affairs, which is authorized to construct houses for workers, has built 204 units and has 185 units under construction. The low rentals on completed units constitute a definite subsidy to the occupants. The city of Basra is now building 750 low-cost houses in accordance with a plan that unfortunately was hastily and inexpertly prepared. Probably the best municipal housing project is near the old city of Bedra in Kut province where a new town site is being developed. The Railway Administration has provided housing for more than 2,400 of its employees, and the Port of Basra is also building accommodations, primarily for its junior officials.

Laws which require the construction of houses by industrial firms and large landowners have remained unenforced. Industrial housing is still little developed. The outstanding project of this kind is at Kirkuk where the Iraq Petroleum Company has been building a large housing development, consisting of 1,028 units, for its skilled artisans and officials. The cost of this project is such, however, that it is unlikely to be widely copied.

Most of the public and quasi-public housing is open to criticism on several counts. Use of poor materials, improper spacing and orientation, poor planning and site engineering have characterized some of these projects. The few public housing projects undertaken have been launched without adequate attention to the problem of how much rent the potential occupants could pay.

Establishment of a Housing Authority

In the light of these considerations, the Mission suggests that the responsibility for planning and supervising housing be entrusted ultimately to a Housing Authority located in the Ministry of Social

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362 647 Affairs and staffed by men trained in house design, architecture, site and sanitary engineering, public health, housing and land economics, and project management. Initially a nucleus for such an Authority might be created by strengthening the existing housing section of the Department of Labor. At present the section is staffed only by one part-time architect with one part-time assistant, a superintendent, and a few clerks and accountants. The Authority should be provided with a Housing Fund to which the Development Board would allocate money set aside for housing and into which the proceeds of rentals would be paid. Maintenance and repairs could thus be financed without constant resort to the Treasury.

[816] The Authority should be complemented by the establishment of an Applied Building Research Station attached to the proposed Department of Industrial Research and Standards in the Ministry of Economics. Such a station would conduct research designed to develop improved methods and techniques for low-cost housing. In particular, it would experiment with the most economical and effective combination of locally available materials and try them in actual housing units. It would test, for example, such possibilities as the utilization of date-palm fronds for the manufacture of pressed boards, of rice husk and asphalt mixed and pressed into blocks or bricks for interior partitions, and of reed mats and bitumen to form waterproof sheets for roofing materials.

362 How much public housing should be undertaken is difficult to determine in the absence of sample surveys to ascertain the needs of different parts of the population, particularly in the light of what they can afford to pay for housing. Housing will, of course, automatically improve as the productivity and the incomes of the people rise, but this does not mean that some portion of the revenue from increased production of oil should not be used to provide housing for those in urgent need. Pending a more thorough study, an amount of about ID 400,000 annually might be taken as a provisional target for expenditures. Presumably public housing should cater primarily to the needs of low-paid employees and industrial workers. While a large public housing program is not a matter of high priority at present, it is vitally important that adequate accom-

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modations be built for government officials in the provinces in 362 ●
order to make living conditions attractive enough for capable men.

Self-help in Housing

Any housing program under present conditions should lay primary stress on the encouragement of self-help measures. The great majority of the *sarifa* dwellers, for example, could probably not afford to live in houses built by the state unless really large subsidies were provided, which the Mission does not recommend. These people can best be assisted by setting aside suitable tracts of land for their resettlement and encouraging them to build their own houses of mud and other readily available materials in accordance with models provided by the government. To insure proper siting of structures the government might assist in staking out the foundations and in providing some of the needed materials such as cement for stabilizing the mud floor. As an incentive toward completion, it might also furnish one of the final elements of the self-built house such as the roof or roof timbers or window frames. A project of this kind is particularly needed for the *sarifa* dwellers of Baghdad. The site of such a project should be well-drained, provided with safe water, sanitary facilities, a school, market and health center and located not too far from places of employment. The government actually started a project of this type but it was unfortunately abandoned.

Similar self-help measures are contemplated in connection with 361
the new land settlement schemes. Here the government has a unique opportunity for new forms of community planning. The Mission has for this purpose developed a suggested pattern which seeks to combine most effectively the features to be desired in such a community. Details of this are set forth in the monograph on community planning. Self-help measures can, of course, also be stimulated in existing villages and small towns, particularly in the direction of constructing public latrines and baths, erecting needed community centers and planting shade trees.

Another means of assisting self-help would be the provision 452
of an adequate system of mortgage credit. Private building has always been handicapped by the lack of credit available on reasonable terms. At the end of 1950 the total mortgages outstanding

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are at present an amalgam of a building code and zoning regulations. These two distinct parts need to be separated and each properly administered.

While the Community Planning Office will have to take the lead in organizing the program, it is essential that it should not attempt to do all the detailed work itself. Although, in some cases, technically good plans may be prepared in this way, the result will be neither popular nor lasting and the planning authority may become a bottleneck. On the other hand, if plans are prepared independently by local authorities or by other government departments, the results will probably be uncorrelated and, therefore, unsatisfactory. The most desirable kind of planning is likely to be achieved by a combination of the two. Although plans should be initiated and later executed by the agencies immediately concerned, the central planning body should guide and coordinate them throughout the various stages. In the larger cities it could probably confine its activity to stimulating interest in the benefits of planning, advising on the preparation of plans and reviewing them at intervals in the course of preparation. In the smaller municipalities, it may have to do more of the actual work, but it should certainly endeavor to enlist as much local advice and cooperation as possible. As was noted earlier, imposition from above is undesirable.

Once plans have been drawn up, the financing of development should be placed on a more satisfactory footing. The principal source of funds for capital expenditure should be the Development Board. Whether they are in the form of loans or grants, they should be committed (although not actually credited) sufficiently far ahead for the municipalities to arrange a schedule of work with some degree of confidence. Loans should be made for a longer period and on less burdensome terms, especially as regards amortization. A careful study of a municipality's finances should be made to assess its probable ability to repay.

Slum Clearance

One of the major problems confronting the municipal authorities is the eradication of the worst slum areas of the cities. In Baghdad and Basra, this is a formidable undertaking, since the influx of people from Amara has been very large. Estimates vary

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362 widely but probably at least 60,000 have migrated to Baghdad and 20,000 to Basra. Amara province is the heart of the rice-growing marshland, where the water buffalo is the prevailing livestock. The immigrants have naturally tended to recreate the conditions of life to which they are accustomed and which will enable them to raise buffalo. An area just outside the eastern bund of Baghdad has been settled by these people and converted to their normal mode of life. A series of stagnant pools for the cattle is interlaced with narrow paths just above the water-level and surrounded by a disorderly array of makeshift huts, called *sarifas*. Being outside the bund, the area is subject to spring floods in years of high water. In Basra the immigrants have settled along the banks of the existing canals. Conditions there are nearly as bad as in Baghdad.

It is clear that the process of migration and the creation of such slums can only be halted by eradicating the cause, namely, the harsh conditions of life in Amara and other places from which the migrants come. Meanwhile efforts will have to be made to resettle those who have already come, since, apart from the plight of the people themselves, these slums are a menace to the health of the entire population of the cities.

362 The few measures so far taken to resettle the sarifa dwellers have not been successful. In Baghdad the Ministry of Social Affairs made a plan for 8,000 mud huts at Shamiya which is about 12 kilometers from Baghdad. Several sample huts of defective construction were erected at the site at a cost of ID 35 each. This plan contemplated the housing of approximately 30,000 people from the sarifa district by giving each famly 120 square meters of land apiece on which they were to build their own houses according to the samples already constructed. Each hut would have had a covered floor area of 43 square meters consisting of two rooms, a hall and a water closet. The main pipelines for a fresh water supply had been provided and a clinic set up for the use of future residents. The plan, however, was later abandoned on the grounds that the site was too far from Baghdad where most of the prospective residents are employed.

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Experience in Basra has been little better. There, the initiative came from the Municipality, which now has under construc-

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tion 750 dwelling units on a site five kilometers from the city. 362 This and three other city development projects were financed by a 10-year bank loan, guaranteed by the Ministry of Finance. The original resettlement plans were, however, hastily and incompetently prepared; they were submitted to the Ministry of Interior only a few days before the foundations were laid. Subsequently they were found by the contractor to be so defective that an advisory committee of experienced engineers had to be appointed to review them. The committee recommended many changes in the layout and site engineering of the project, in the design of the houses and in the specifications of materials. Some of the changes, including the installation of an adequate sewage and drainage system, had to be made after construction was well under way.

Ultimately the cost of two-room houses is expected to be about ID 250 and of three-room houses, about ID 300. It is unlikely that the sarifa dwellers can afford to purchase these houses by installment as originally intended. The Municipality now has in mind to build 1,000 mud-and-mat huts at a cost of ID 40 each for sale to the sarifa dwellers.

Other cities besides Baghdad and Basra have their slum problems, though not necessarily of the same kind. For example, all but the most modern part of Erbil is situated on a high mound, rising almost sheer from the surrounding plain. On this mound, which is probably on the site of a city continuously occupied for several thousand years, the houses are packed together with only narrow alleys between them. Waste water runs down the middle of the alleys. The incidence of tuberculosis is said to be high. Less extensive examples of these so-called ancient "citadels" can be found elsewhere, for example, in Kirkuk and at Nabi Yunus near Mosul.

The problem of resettling large numbers of slum dwellers [166] varies, in kind and in degree, from city to city, but it should in essence be treated as a national problem. It is too important to be subjected to the kind of expediency and faulty technical planning with which it has so far been approached. The job is one for the new Housing Authority, although the municipalities will clearly have to play their part.

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362 With more realistic planning, the mistakes previously made could be avoided. Preliminary investigation of the incomes and occupations of prospective occupiers of a resettlement project should be made in order to suit the site development and the cost of the buildings to the needs and incomes of the people. Sites should be well drained and within easy access to places of work. Depressed areas where water is liable to collect into stagnant pools should be avoided. If the only available site is still deficient from the point of view of drainage, then the ground should be improved by grading and filling before any hut is constructed. Too often in the past, the availability of government-owned land has been the governing factor in the choice of site without regard to the availability of places of employment, community facilities and public services.

Plans should be worked out for the construction of integrated neighborhoods with facilities such as safe water, sanitation, school, playground, market and health center. Their construction should be programmed over a number of years. The dwellings would have to be very simple, if the state is not to make large subsidies, which the Mission does not recommend. Instead, the same principles of aided self-help might be employed as in the villages. For example, simple but liveable mud-and-mat huts could be designed in such a way and with sufficient lot area so that their occupants could improve and extend them as they earn more income or as their families grow bigger. To improve the durability and strength of the walls, the mud of which they are made should be stabilized with materials like cement or reinforced with reeds or grass. To insure proper siting of structures, the government might stake out the foundations and help furnish some of the needed materials such as cement for stabilizing the earth floor. As an incentive toward completion, the government might also furnish one of the final elements of the self-built house, such as the roof. If representatives of the prospective occupants could be interested and consulted at an early stage and if places of employment were taken into consideration at the same time, the projects would stand a much better chance of success, for they would be not only better places in which to live but also better places in which to make a living.

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IV. Housing

Although the resettlement of slum dwellers and the improvement of living conditions in the villages constitute by far the largest housing needs of the country, the provision of adequate housing on reasonable terms to workers on a somewhat higher income level is also important. Efforts in this direction have been started by the central and municipal governments, by the two quasi-public transport organizations and by the Iraq Petroleum Company. Private entrepreneurs have found it profitable to concentrate largely on construction for the well-to-do. Some of the projects have good features, particularly that carried out by the IPC. Generally, however, defects are such that there is clearly much that a Housing Authority could accomplish.

The Need for a Housing Authority

The need for a Housing Authority is twofold. First, it is required to take the initiative in providing suitable housing for the lowest economic strata of the population, such as the Baghdad sarifa dwellers. This is a special kind of problem, which cannot be expected to be undertaken by other agencies. Secondly, it is required as a general, policy-making, coordinating and advisory agency. In this there is no suggestion that it should try to undertake housing for the whole country. On the contrary, initiative from municipalities, quasi-government agencies and private concerns should be welcomed. The function of the Authority should be to give technical, legal and financial assistance where it is required; to prescribe certain minimum standards; and to act on its own initiative only in cases where there seems to be both an urgent need and no alternative.

It will be necessary for the Authority to initiate a systematic survey in order to assemble all the necessary data for the formulation of a national housing program. Census data will be helpful, but probably additional assistance will be required from the statistics department of the Ministry of Economics in devising sampling techniques in order to determine the requirements. These would be especially useful in resettlement projects for sarifa dwellers.

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Due to the nature and magnitude of the work involved, the Housing Authority should be firmly established in the Ministry of Social Affairs and provided with powers commensurate with its responsibilities so that it may perform its functions effectively. It should ultimately have a staff composed of technical men trained in housing design, architecture, site and sanitary engineering, law and project management. As in the Community Planning Office, they should also have some knowledge of the sociological and economic aspects.

On the financial side, the Housing Authority should be provided with a Housing Fund to which the Development Board would allocate money set aside for housing and into which the proceeds of rentals would be paid so that maintenance and repairs could be financed without constant resort to the Treasury. Pending a housing survey the amounts set aside for housing in the five-year program of the Development Board, namely ID 300,000 annually, might be increased to ID 400,000 as a provisional target for housing expenditures.

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On the technical side, the Housing Authority should be complemented by the establishment of an Applied Building Research Station attached to the proposed Department of Research and Standards in the Ministry of Economics. Such a station should test, develop and demonstrate improved methods and techniques for low-cost housing; collect and disseminate technical housing and building information; experiment with and develop new uses of local building materials, construction methods and house designs; and carry on other useful research in the housing field. The Station should be staffed as far as possible with local technicians, but for the first year or so one or two building research experts from abroad should be engaged to start and run the Station and train the local technicians in order to enable them to operate the Station themselves after a time. A new building should be constructed for the Station and equipped with the basic instruments and machines necessary for starting tests and experiments. It will clearly be necessary for the Authority to work closely with the Station and to insure that the broad outlines of its work conform with the need of the country.

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Labor and Materials

The Housing Authority could also take the lead in improving the quality of labor and materials in order to bring the costs of building down. In this task, it should cooperate with the Ministry of Education in reorganizing training methods. It could also advise the Industrial Bank on desirable types of specifications of building materials and should estimate probable requirements so that the Bank could initiate investment to this end in partnership with private enterprise.

The materials produced locally for housing construction are on the whole inferior and expensive. For example, a casual inspection of house construction in the cities will reveal that unevenly burnt bricks with cracks and chipped-off edges and corners have been and are being used. To remedy the shortage of good building materials, foreign goods have been imported at high cost. In the case of the IPC housing project, it was estimated that the cost of imported steel window and door sashes alone amounted to as much as 20 percent of the cost of the structures.

The inferiority of building materials is matched by the poor quality of building labor, which again adds to the cost of construction. There is urgent need for good carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians and painters. Unfortunately, attempts to improve skills through vocational schools have not been altogether successful. The schools lack competent instructors, a number of those teaching in Baghdad, for example, being illiterate. Workshop accommodations are restricted and the equipment is out-of-date or in bad condition. These deficiencies might be overcome by importing instructors from neighboring countries, by obtaining new equipment and by running evening classes until more laboratory space is available. This is not, however, the full answer. Graduates from vocational schools tend to prefer desk jobs to field work. It would be preferable to concentrate more on training schemes on the job under good supervision.

Government Housing

The Ministry of Social Affairs is empowered by Law No. 38 of 1941 and Law No. 22 of 1945 to "construct dwellings for

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362 laborers at government expense" which may be sold or leased to them in accordance with special regulations.

[152] Housing projects have been financed by allocation from the capital works budget prepared every year. The unspent balance from this allocation reverts to the general treasury. Likewise the rents paid by tenants and the fees collected for maintenance, sanitary services, water and electricity find they way back to the general treasury. The 1950-51 budget provides ID 75,000 for housing. The five-year program of the Development Board envisages an increase to ID 150,000 in 1951-52 and to ID 300,000 in each of the four succeeding years.

The Ministry's principal project is at Tel Mohamed, about seven kilometers from Baghdad, where 204 brick dwelling units had been constructed by the Ministry of Public Works in 1946 and a further 185 are now under construction. Twenty shops are also being built. Most of the houses have a bedroom, a living room, a kitchen, a water closet and one or two verandas, but 50 of the newer ones will have two bedrooms. Floor area ranges from 49 to 71 square meters and the cost from ID 268 to ID 323, excluding the cost of development and of land which is government-owned. Lots were 150 square meters for the older houses, but the newer ones are smaller.

Rentals for the first dwelling units in the Tel Mohamed Project used to be ID 2.0 a month, but this was reduced later to ID 1.5. The government supplied water and electricity at an additional charge of 500 fils a month. Based on the actual cost of construction of each unit (ID 305) a generous estimate of 20 years for the life of the structures, interest on capital investment at the rate of six percent per annum and a nominal sum of ID 10 annually for maintenance of grounds plus repairs and land rental, the economic rent for each such unit would be ID 3.0 a month—that is, if no vacancy and unforeseen circumstances occurred to reduce the income from the project. In other words, the government has to make a subsidy equal to the present rental of ID 1.5 per month, if it hopes to replace these houses at the end of their estimated life.

In addition to these units in Baghdad, the Ministry requested bids for 40 one- and two-bedroom units in Basra which it rejected because the prices were too high, mainly because bricks made in

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the vicinity of Basra were not up to specifications and the additional cost of haulage from Baghdad had to be borne. 362●

Municipalities, which come under the Ministry of Interior, carry out projects such as those at Bedra and Basra. For various reasons, principally lack of finance, there have been few such projects. Other ministries occasionally provide houses for their officials who are stationed in the provinces, but, on the whole, the standard of housing for these officials is deplorably low. The incentive to obtain jobs in Baghdad is already considerable. The government needs able officials who will work willingly in the field and who will have a standing in their community. A decent house is certainly one of the prerequisites to attract such men.

Housing by Transport and Industrial Enterprises

The Port of Basra, which has over 5,000 employees, is at present completing the construction of 50 dwelling units for junior employees and is contemplating further building. Although there are plans for smaller houses of 45 square meters to cost about ID 300, most of these houses, which are of brick, concrete and steel, are much larger and have such additional facilities as a bath, storeroom and veranda leading to the roof. Their cost is, accordingly, high, ranging from ID 1,500 to ID 2,000, but they are let at a nominal rent.

Although the buildings were well designed and the materials used were of good quality, the site planning was not thoroughly studied. Too many structures were crowded in a limited area in spite of the fact that the Port has plenty of available land at its disposal. The yard spaces between the buildings and the high brick fences separating the units are hardly six feet wide. Buildings having different orientations have identical plans.

In 1926 the Iraqi State Railways started a program for the replacement of temporary buildings built after World War I. It is estimated that about 60 percent of the needed permanent quarters for artisans and laborers in stations other than those in Baghdad and Magil (Basra) have already been provided. Suitable quarters at Baghdad and Magil have been provided only for those members of the staff who are required, for operational reasons, to live in close proximity to the work.

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362 The quarters which have so far been provided for laborers and artisans of the Iraqi State Railways are: 283 units consisting of two-room quarters, 2,090 units of one room and 60 units of sarifas.

Shortly after World War II, the Iraq Petroleum Company embarked on a large housing project in order to provide accommodation for its entire staff of artisans and their families. This was done because the increase in its activities and employees had caused a strong pressure on the available housing in Kirkuk. When rents became exorbitant, the company give its employees a rental allowance, but this failed in its purpose as rents rose by a corresponding amount almost immediately. The project has already succeeded in lowering rents in the town, the artisans' families who have moved in having released space in the town for laborers' housing. It is not proposed to extend the project to laborers' housing, first because of the shortage of materials and secondly because of the generally transient nature of the unskilled labor force.

The present housing project under construction in the Arrapha Ridge Area near Kirkuk will be finished in five to six years and will eventually consist of 1,028 houses. Of this number, 284 have been completed and accommodate about 1,485 people. At present [342] there are 58 more under construction. There are three basic types of houses: the one-bedroom, the two-bedroom and the three-bedroom semi-detached and attached units. Except for relative sizes and the number of bedrooms, the various types of houses have the same number of rooms: a living room, a kitchen, a storeroom, a bath, a water closet, a veranda and an enclosed courtyard. Stairs lead up to the flat roofs. The houses are surrounded by gardens.

The houses have walls made of bricks and stones with portland cement mortar, floors and ceilings of concrete, and window and door sashes of steel and glass. They are provided with both cold and hot water and with electricity. Each one-bedroom unit costs about ID 1,400 to build including utilities, and rents for ID 3.6 per month plus a service charge for water, power, etc., of ID 1.2. The biggest or three-bedroom unit costs about ID 3,000 and rents for ID 7.5 per month plus a service charge of ID 2.1.

The housing project has been planned on the neighborhood unit scheme—there being two units with schools, open spaces, stores and clinics. In addition the entire project will ultimately

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have a mosque, a church, a post office, a cinema, a restaurant, a police station and an institute equipped with reading rooms and a debating chamber. Streets and alleys are laid out to conform to the ground contours and paved with asphalt macadam. The streets are lighted and have recently been planted with trees. The project is much in advance of anything else that has so far been undertaken in Iraq, but its cost and the large element of subsidy involved make it impossible of general emulation.

The Iraq Petroleum Company is the only large private industrial concern which has provided substantial housing facilities for its employees, although in 1943 a law was approved compelling industrial project owners to construct houses for their laborers. This law has apparently been ineffective. Although there is much to be said for placing responsibility on industry for housing in out-of-the-way places, the Mission is of the opinion that, in general, provision of housing is an inappropriate burden on industry.

Private Housing; Mortgage Credit

The most spectacular ventures in private housing in recent years were two grandiose developments in Baghdad for the well-to-do. Both of there were financial failures.

Private housing of a more modest character for the middle classes, who cannot afford large outlays, requires assistance in the form of mortgage credit. In the main report, the Mission has recommended that the facilities offered by the Government Mortgage Bank be augmented. Instead of the original capital of ID 100,000, capital resources of ID 1,500,000 are suggested. The duration of loans, which is now limited to four years, should be increased to 15 years where it is considered desirable.

V. Public Utilities

As indicated earlier, considerable progress has been made in providing the larger towns with water and electricity, but sewage systems have been wholly neglected. The Ministry of Interior is, with a few major exceptions, responsible for the planning, installation and general supervision of these public utilities. The actual

services. "The disease has been recognized", he said, "what was required was that medicine for the prescription should be supplied and the patient taught how to take that medicine". The same Minister informed us that he himself, as a young man called upon to draft a new educational programme, had included in it the provision of community centres, but that unfortunately this feature of the scheme had not materialized. 657 185

45. Community welfare organization on a self-help basis in Iraq is, indeed, as yet in its infancy. Some observers consider that an indispensable preliminary to its development is to create in the minds of a people long under the influence and domination of a feudal tribal system an effective desire for self-government.

46. As is generally known, Iraq is rich in oil resources and it is the policy of the Government to transfer mineral wealth into productive capital for the general welfare. A statutory Development Board was established in 1950 to ensure continuity of economic policy, regardless of political changes. Seventy per cent of the income from oil revenues is allocated to the Board as revenue for projects of water conservation, flood control, irrigation, drainage, industry, mining, etc. The Board is also responsible for co-ordinating the development schemes in these fields initiated by the various ministerial Departments. Over 200 foreign technicians are listed as working in Iraq in formulating a variety of development schemes, mostly relating to economic improvements. Some of the experts are in the direct employ of the Iraq Government: others have been assigned to the Government for short periods for specific purposes by agencies and organizations furnishing technical assistance on a bilateral or multilateral basis. Relatively few technicians have so far been concerned with social developments, but the country's needs in this respect have, we understand, been partially surveyed. 651 382 185 491

47. In the absence of detailed documentation, we left it to the Government agencies most directly concerned with the subject of our mission to determine whom we should see and to suggest which projects or institutions we should visit. 000

48. During our short stay in Baghdad we were able to visit at Tal Mohamed a well-constructed modern building designed to serve as a centre for community activities for the residents of a model housing estate constructed by the Ministry of Social Affairs for low-income government employees. Cheap transport facilities were available between Baghdad and the new estate, in which some 500 houses were already in occupation and more would be constructed as funds became available. The imposing building in which it is intended that community activities shall be carried out has been ready for use for more than a year but only some of the equipment and furniture (including seven beds for maternity cases) have been installed. A difficulty in finding suitable qualified staff has delayed the opening of the centre. When it is in full working order it is planned to offer nursing, educational and indoor and outdoor recreational facilities on modern lines. The general appearance of the centre and model village was marred by the state of the roads after heavy rains. 657 185 362

49. It is understood that centres similar to that at Tal Mohamed are planned for other urban areas. The Ministry of Social Affairs, which until recently formed part of the Ministry of Health, has also other plans under consideration for creating, with external technical assistance, pilot projects of community organization or demonstration centres, in urban as well as in rural areas.

50. A survey of Iraq villages jointly conducted by Mr. Gordon MacGregor (TCA adviser to the Ministry of Social Affairs) and Dr. Yusuf Khaddoury, M.D. (Officer in charge of international relations of that Ministry) reveals: 185 657